

REMARKS

Claims 1-4 and 10 stand rejected under 35 USC 102 over Shinno, claims 1-5 and 10 stand rejected under 35 USC 102 over Tourtellotte et al, and claim 15 stands rejected under 35 USC 103 over each of Shinno and Tourtellotte et al in view of Houdry. Applicant gratefully acknowledges that the examiner has indicated that claims 6-9 and 16 contain allowable subject matter.

Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 6, other than the requirements that the inner wall or shell should extend through the outer wall or shell in substantially coaxial relationship, that the space defined between the inner and outer shells should be substantially annular and that the walls that divide the space defined between the inner and outer shells should be radial. Applicant believes that claim 1, as currently amended, is patentable over the prior art.

Claim 1, as currently amended, specifies an outer shell, an inner shell, and partition walls dividing the space between the inner and outer shells into first and second transfer zones and at least one through-flow zone. Applicant believes that Shinno does not disclose or suggest such a structure, since the space 18, identified by the examiner as the counterpart for the first transfer zone of claim 1, appears to be annular and not divided into zones by walls extending between the tubes 11 and 12.

Tourtellotte et al discloses a catalytic muffler having cylindrical or frusto-conical walls and does not appear to disclose walls that divide the space between inner and outer shells into zones as recited in claim 1.

The examiner relies on Houdry as disclosing use of multiple catalytic converter units in series and accordingly Houdry does not supply any of the deficiencies of Shinno and Tourtellotte et al with regard to the structure of the catalytic converter unit as defined in claim 1.

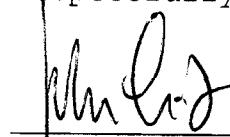
In view of the foregoing, applicant submits that the invention as defined in claim 1 is not disclosed or suggested by Shinno, Tourtellotte et al and Houdry, whether taken singly or in

combination. Therefore, claim 1 is patentable and it follows that the dependent claims also are patentable.

Claim 15 has been amended to include the features of claim 16 and it is therefore believed that claim 15 is allowable.

Claims 11-14, having been withdrawn from consideration, are now canceled in order to expedite allowance of this application, without prejudice to applicant's right to file one or more divisional applications with respect to the subject matter of those claims.

Respectfully submitted,



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